

I-81 Safety and Operational Improvements

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- We will continue to improve I-81.
 - In recent years, more than \$172 million has been invested in:
 - * Widening of seven miles at Bristol
 - * New Exit 118 at Christiansburg
 - * Extension of on- and off-ramps, installation of guardrail, and other safety projects in Salem District

Exit 118

- We will continue to improve I-81.
 - Today we are:
 - * Building four new bridges near Lexington for \$60 million
 - * Building a bridge at Exit 313 near Winchester for \$9 million

Rockbridge County



- In the future, VDOT proposes to:
 - * **Build improvements** in selected locations to address existing safety and operational issues.
 - * **Manage traffic** throughout the corridor to enhance safety.
 - * **Use SAFETEA-LU** funds to build truck-climbing lanes.

- Build proposed short-term improvements in selected locations:
 - **Extend on- and off-ramps**

Examples:

- * At Exit 77, Wythe County, extend NB and SB off-ramps about 1,000 feet: \$1.4 million
- * At Exit 137, Roanoke County, extend SB decel lane: \$4 million
- * At Exit 317, Frederick county, extend accel/decel lanes at Route 11: \$4 million

- Install median guardrail and upgrade substandard guardrail



- **Correct curve problems**
- **Modify three major interchanges**



- * Exit 17, Washington County
- * Route 11 relocation at Exit 150, Botetourt County
- * Exit 313, Frederick County

- These recommendations address current conditions.
- They do not provide additional capacity.

- Manage traffic safety and operations conditions throughout the corridor:
 - Institute **additional Safety Service Patrols** for quicker incident clearance and to reduce secondary crashes.
 - **Use of ITS** with some cameras and changeable message signs to provide real-time traffic conditions.
 - **Increase speed enforcement** by working with VSP and localities.

Safety and Operations Improvements proposed include:

- Adding additional cameras and variable message boards to better detect and alert motorists of conditions
- Increase the use of Safety Service Patrols for Quick Clearance of crashes, breakdowns; Evaluate use of a specialty truck safety service
- Pilot new technologies such as electronic variable speed control
- Evaluate the use of automated enforcement
- Examine other locations for Highway Safety Corridors coupled with increased law enforcement presence in the corridors
- Explore the use of automated ticketing for overweight vehicles

SAFETEA-LU Sec. 1302 provides \$100 million for “construction of dedicated truck lanes on additional capacity on I-81.”



FHWA has said truck climbing lanes will qualify for this earmark.

- VDOT will continue to improve I-81.
- An ongoing program of safety improvements apart from the NEPA study is appropriate.
- VDOT will continue to leverage available federal funding under SAFETEA-LU.